

Fort Leavenworth,  
Building # 40 & 41  
622 Thomas Avenue  
Leavenworth  
Leavenworth County  
Kansas

HABS No. KS-53-J

HABS  
KANS,  
52-LEAV,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FORT LEAVENWORTH, BUILDING # 40 HABS #:KS-53-J

Location:

622 Thomas Avenue, Fort Leavenworth,  
Leavenworth County, Kansas

Leavenworth, Kansas-Missouri Quadrangle,  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 15.334450.4357700

Present Owner:

U.S. Department of the Army

Present Occupant:

Lt. Colonel and Mrs. C.M. Maunsell

Present Use:

Residential

Significance:

Building # 40, and its nearly identical neighbors, #'s 39 and 41, are significant as examples at this post of the gabled plains cottage, and as the smallest independent units serving as officers' quarters. Their construction is consistent with the policy for residences after 1880, i.e., masonry construction on standardized plans. Fort Leavenworth experienced growth due to the trend toward consolidation of scattered military posts, and also to the development of the U.S. Infantry and Cavalry School, founded in 1881; these missions accelerated the demand for additional quarters. The cottages on Thomas Avenue were a response to that demand, and also represent the few quarters built originally for junior officers at this post.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: 1889.
2. Architect: Unknown. Plans originated in the Office of the Quartermaster General, Washington, D.C.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Department of War; after 1947, known as the U.S. Department of the Army.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Unknown. Construction cost was \$2,486.67 ("Designation, Cost, Material of Buildings, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas", Washington: GSA, 1958, National Archives, microfilm copy, Fort Leavenworth Museum).
5. Original plans: Original plans were located at the National

Archives (Record Box 96-92, Box 548). They include front and side elevations and foundation and first floor plans (see Supplemental Materials # 1 & # 2). An undated plan shows the floor plan prior to the modeling done about 1961. The drawing of a cottage labeled "plan of proposed Officer Quarters at Fort Leavenworth", dated May 18, 1884, closely resembles Buildings # 39, # 40, and # 41, with minor discrepancies, i.e., the front porch has a separate roof, and a rear porch is shown, which does not appear on the present site (see Supplemental Material # 3). This drawing shows a front door enclosure; historic photographs from the turn of the century show an enclosure apparently smaller. However, the idea may have been retained from the standard design. No record was found to indicate when the enclosure was removed. Also included at the Fort Leavenworth Museum is a first floor plan dated May 19, 1884; labeled "proposed ground plan for six cottages (officer's quarters) at Fort Leavenworth" (see Supplemental Material # 4).

6. Alterations & additions: The undated plan (above mentioned) probably shows the original room arrangement: the bath was the first room in the wing, on the north, east of two bedrooms. The bathroom/dining room partition wall was common. The bedroom east and west of the bath had access to it and to the dining room. Stairs led to the attic and the basement. The floor plans of April 21, 1961 show existing and new partitions. The changes were as follows: the bath was moved west, into the north half of the former small bedroom, and a hall and closets were created from the south half. The former bathroom was enlarged by moving the bath/dining room partition to the south. The hall gave access to this bedroom, the bath, and the front (west) bedroom. The stair to the attic was removed, and a door created between the third bedroom (east) and the "breakfast room" (the former "passage"). A half-bath for this bedroom was created from about half the laundry room. The large closets were removed from the parlor; the opening between the parlor and the dining room was widened. This is the floor plan that presently exists.

#### B. Historical Context:

Fort Leavenworth was crowded in the 1870's; the Department of the Missouri returned to the post in 1870, where it was to remain until 1890. Appropriations for housing were limited after 1870, and applied largely to adaptations and building associated with the establishment of the Military Prison. In 1881, the School of Application for Cavalry and Infantry was founded "to cope with the technological, organizational, and tactical changes occurring in warfare---", with an initial class of forty-two lieutenants

(Langellier, "Overview", p. 59, Hunt, p. 131-139). Also, the decade of the 1880's witnessed a consolidation of scattered military posts, advocated since 1870. These developments resulted in considerable construction over the following years.

An prime area for expansion was the "West End". General John Pope had planned a new garrison at this location when the Department of the Missouri returned in 1870. Appropriations in that year enabled construction of six double residences for officers to the north of the present Kearney Avenue, west of Thomas Avenue. These quarters remained somewhat solitary for some years, facing a broad open field to the south. Here the school held mounted drills and exercises, and "those ceremonies of parade in which the cavalry and light artillery" turned out with the infantry. These colorful reviews were viewed from the vantage points provided by the verandas of the quarters.

In 1881, the block to the east of this parade ground was largely open; a few buildings were located to the northeast - a hospital, a Catholic church and school (1871-1889, 1904; Hunt, p. 269). In that year, the School of Application for Cavalry and Infantry was established in a new building at the northeast corner (McClellan and Organ). Kearney Avenue was a driveway, extending only a half-block west from McClellan. At some point, Kearney and Custer Avenues were cut east-west through the field, possibly in 1883, when the second post hospital was built south of Custer Avenue.

The west side of the block, facing the parade ground, was the site chosen for additional officers' quarters to be built in the summer of 1889. Advertisements were placed for bids by C.W. Foster, Chief Quartermaster of the Department of the Missouri, on May 29, 1889. The advertised list of proposed buildings included two brick buildings for double sets of officers' quarters, and seven cottages of brick with shingle roofs for single sets. According to the advertisement, the contractor was to furnish the labor and the necessary materials to construct the buildings "in accordance with the accompanying plans and specifications of buildings at Fort Leavenworth." Also, as stated, when price and quality were equal, preference was to be given to "articles of domestic production or manufacture." In a letter to the Quartermaster General, Foster stated that "It is not proposed to erect all of these buildings, but only one or the other of the different styles presented, and that the kind to be built will be determined, by proper authority, after the bids therefor shall have been received and forwarded". Work was to commence on July 1, to be completed by December 1, 1889.

As built, the quarters consisted, from Kearney Avenue southward, of two large double residences (Buildings # 37 and # 38), and three one-story cottages (Buildings # 39- # 41) for junior

officers (Lieutenant), all constructed of brick. Each cottage cost \$2,486.67 to build.

Occupancy research is incomplete, but indicates that early residents were lieutenants. A dental surgeon, on contract, occupied the building in 1909. In neighboring Building # 41, medical officers and a contract surgeon were residents in the latter 1890's and through 1910. In the 1950's and 1960's, Building # 40 occupants were officers of the Medical Corps, reflecting the proximity of the succession of post hospitals. From about 1920 through 1954, the occupants were Warrant Officers; in May, 1963, the building was redesignated as Field Grade Officer (Lieutenant-Colonel) quarters.

This block of buildings appears today very much as when constructed, still overlooking the open field to the west. As the surrounding area built up in the interim, the old appellation "the West End" disappeared.

## PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

#### 1. Architectural character:

Building # 40 is a variation on the gabled plains cottage, as that type is described in Gottfried and Jennings' American Vernacular Design: 1840-1940 (pp. 182-183). Several features are atypical of the type, i.e.: the brick construction, the porch which extends across the facade, covered by the extended roof, and the symmetrical three-bay facade. Gables are sheathed by wooden fish-scale shingles, with scrollwork ornamentation at the apex. First story bays have segmental arches; doorways have transoms. The masonry construction and the symmetry of fenestration result in a degree of formalness uncommon to the cottage. An historical photograph (undated) of one of the three quarters built in this style is located at Fort Leavenworth Museum entitled "Quarters, Thomas Avenue" (see Supplemental Material # 5).

2. Condition of fabric: The buildings appears to be in very good condition.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The main block is 32' x 25', with a north-south ridge-line; the east-west wing is 39' x 27'. The porch across the west facade measures 32' x 7'.

2. Foundations: The foundation is of coursed limestone rubble above ground, with random rubble below grade.
3. Walls: Walls are of red brick laid in running bond, with a header-course at the foundation line, and a quarter-round top course on the water table. The facade is painted dark red; wood trim is painted white (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-2).
4. Structural systems, framing: The masonry walls are load-bearing. Exterior walls measure fifteen inches at west, south, and east entries. Interior wall widths measure as follows: parlor/dining-room, five inches; dining-room/passage, five inches; passage/kitchen, four and a half inches; kitchen/laundry, four and three-quarters inches; hall/bath, four and a half inches; hall/west bedroom, four and a half inches; hall/middle bedroom, five inches.

The thirty-nine inch square attic opening is in the hall ceiling. The newer plasterboard ceiling is thirty-two inches lower than the original lath and plaster one. Joists measure  $1\frac{5}{8}$ " x 6", on twenty-four inch centers. The attic ridge beam runs north-south. Rafters are  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 5", on twenty-two and a half to twenty-six inch centers, without spacing pattern; they bear circular saw-marks. Horizontal slats measure  $\frac{3}{4}$ " x  $5\frac{1}{4}$ - $5\frac{1}{2}$ ", under a sub-roof of four and a half inch tongue-and-groove boards running parallel to the rafters. The chimney near the center of the main block measures 21" x 17"; it is truncated at the roof.

The basement has an old support system running east-west, at the north of the stair. This consists of  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8" center beam supported on a thirteen inch square brick pier and a five and a quarter inch square post. South of the stair, an older support parallels the first, under the west half of the basement, consisting of a five inch square wood beam on a  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inch square post and a steel (round) post. These are supplemented by wood posts and beams running along the north and south walls; beams are 5" x  $5\frac{1}{4}$ " on five inch square posts. Floor joists measure  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " x 10", supplemented at mid-length of the basement by newer one and five-eighth inch joists; the sub-floor is of three and a half inch boards.

5. Porches: The one story frame porch across the west elevation is raised on brick piers with framed lattice infill-sections below floor level. It is covered by the roof extension, which is supported on four turned, tapered posts, linked by a rail and balustrade with square balusters. The eaves are boxed; the guttering runs along the eaves. Triangular wood

sections unite the eaves to the body of the house; the raised frame is chamfered, over a base of narrow tongue-and-groove boards (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-1 & 2).

6. Chimneys: The remaining chimney is located at two-thirds the length of the wing, on the ridge; it is red brick, without trim, and concrete capped.
7. Openings: Bays on the main story have two-header segmental arches, with plain wood infill (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-2 & 3).
  - a. Doorways & doors: The principal doorway is the central bay on the west elevation. Narrow molding encloses the single-light transom and door, which is four-panel, having the two longer panels above the rail. The door to the south is the same; that on the east has four lights with one and a half inch mullions, over three raised cross panels with radius corners. The doors on the south and east elevations have stone sills and concrete steps.
  - b. Windows & shutters: Windows on the main story have two-over-two lights, and stone lug sills. There are two windows on the south and north elevations, two on the north and south of the main block, and four on the wing elevations. One window on the north is smaller and raised (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-2). Basement windows are below ground level, in bricked wells; these are small awning-type windows. The one on the west is bricked in.

North and south gables have small rectangular single-light windows near the apex, and behind the scrollwork ornament; these are plain framed, with only a drip table and sill (see HABS # KS-53-J-3). The window in the east gable has two lights; the plain frame has a drip table (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-4).

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof is of intersecting gables; the main block ridge-line runs north-south. The wing ends in a gable-over-hip. The covering is light gray composition shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Eaves and gables are boxed, with narrow molding. The main block gables have scrollwork ornamentation at the apex, over alternating sections of square and fish-scale

wood shingles (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-3). The east gable is covered with clapboard (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-4).

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: See Supplemental Materials # 1 & # 2). The basement is under the wing, with a six foot three inch ceiling (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-6). There is a low crawl space beneath the main block.
2. Stairways: Stairs to the basement are off the passage, and are a straight run of nine, ten inch wide steps, open below the first story. The stair is thirty inches wide. A stair to the attic opened off the kitchen; this was removed.
3. Flooring: Most of the house has carpet over two and one-quarter inch oak floors. The kitchen and laundry room have sheet vinyl flooring in a gray mosaic tile pattern. The full bath has white ceramic tile flooring; the half-bath floor is two and a half inch oak, varnished. The basement floor is poured concrete; the furnace area is depressed twenty-one inches and walled with brick; one brick is stamped, VVV Brick & J. Co., Neodesha, Ks.
4. Wall & ceiling finish: Basement walls are painted rubblestone. (see HABS photo # KS-53-J-6). The main floor has smooth finish plaster and plasterboard walls. Ceilings have been lowered, as noted; the original ceilings are lath and plaster, while the newer ones are plasterboard on wood framing. The full bath has white ceramic tile on the lower walls. A raised flue is mid-length of the north parlor wall.
5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways & doors: Interior doors are wood slab, varnished; the doors between passage and dining room are four-fold louvered doors on a track. Exterior doors are as noted, and probably original.
  - b. Windows: The characteristic two-over-two light windows with one and a half inch mullions, measure approximately 35" x 80" (openings), with an eight inch sill depth. The apron and sill measure three and one-quarter inches; the apron is twenty-two inches above the floor. The raised north window is about forty-five inches above the floor.
6. Decorative features & trim: Door and window trim is

modern, with two and a half inch wood framing. Kitchen cabinets are varnished birch, with slabdoors. An old wood shelf on the kitchen south wall is not original to the house. The laundry has plain wood shelving on the west and south walls.

7. Hardware: On the west and east elevation doors, doorplates are rectangular brass with a beveled edge, and plain knob. The south door has brass plates with a rope border trim, and matching knob.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. HVAC: Heat is supplied by an American-Standard forced-air, gas-fired furnace. The gas water heater is Luxr Double Glass-lined. Window unit air-conditioners are used.
- b. Lighting: Light fixtures date to the 1960's remodeling, or are more recent.
- c. Plumbing: Pipes are copper and galvanized. Bathroom fixtures are modern; some fixtures are marked Crane Oxford brand.

D. Site:

Building # 40 is the middle of three like buildings along Thomas Avenue at Custer. To the south across Custer is a double brick residence, and the second and third post hospitals. To the north, toward Kearney, are two large brick double residences, and across Kearney, brick barracks including "the Beehive". The buildings on Thomas Avenue overlook to the west a level stretch of open field, the old "West End Parade" (see HABS photo #KS-53-19). The relationship of Building # 40 with the other buildings in this area of the post is depicted in Wilhelm Danneier's "Bird's Eye View of Fort Leavenworth, 1881" (see Supplemental Material # 6) .

PART III: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings:

"Plan of Proposed Officers' Quarters at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Side elevation." May 18, 1884. National Archives. Photostatic copy, Fort Leavenworth Museum.

"Proposed Ground Plan for Six Cottages (Officers' Quarters) at Fort Leavenworth." May 19, 1884. Old Floor Plan drawer, Fort Museum.

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Floor Plans, April 1947. Drawer Buildings # 28-# 44,  
Directorate of Engineering and Housing, Fort Leavenworth.

"Typical Plan Views, Buildings # 39, # 40, # 41:  
Architectural; Plumbing and Heating; Electrical". April  
21, 1961. "Details, Buildings # 39, # 40, # 41, # 58".  
April 21, 1961. Drawer 26-45, DEH.

"Floor Plan No. 7: Buildings # 39, # 40, # 41." Current  
plan. DEH.

B. Early Views:

Photograph. "Officers' Quarters: Riverside" collection, Fort  
Museum.

Dammeier, Wilhelm, Architect, Engineer, and Lithographer.  
"Bird's Eye View of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1881".  
Ft. Leavenworth: U.S. Department of the Missouri, 1881.  
Museum.

Photograph. Fort Leavenworth file, Still Photograph  
Division, Record Group 92, National Archives.

C. Interviews: Lt. Colonel and Mrs. Maunsell assisted with  
information about the attic, and the former stairway to the  
attic: reportedly, a fragment remaining is visible from the  
wing attic.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary & unpublished sources:

Fort Leavenworth Real Property Records, DEH.

----- Historical Property Records, Vol.1, DEH.

Fort Leavenworth Historical Society Quarters Research File  
(Streets Reynolds-Thomas), Fort Museum.

"Department of the Army Inventory of Historic Property",  
March 1, 1977, DEH.

Building # 40. GMGO Plan File, Building # 1-# 94, Fort  
Museum.

"Proposals for Construction of Barracks and Quarters at  
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas", May 29, 1889; and letter to  
Quartermaster General, June 11, 1889, from C.W. Foster,

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Chief Quartermaster, Fort Leavenworth, May 29, 1889. No.37, Box 548, Consolidated Correspondence File, 1794-1890, Record Group 92, National Archives Record Service, Records of Quartermaster General.

"Designation, Costs, Material of Buildings, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas." Records of War Department---Fort Leavenworth. Washington: GSA, 1958. Microfilm copy, Museum.

Langellier, J.P. "Fort Leavenworth Preservation Overview" (unpublished). Fort Leavenworth: DEH, March, 1985.

2. Secondary & published sources

Hunt, Elvid, and Lorence, Walter E. History of Fort Leavenworth, 1827-1937. Fort Leavenworth Command and General Staff School Press, 1937.

- E: Likely Sources not yet investigated: Further search of pertinent record holdings at National Archives, Washington, D.C., is advisable.
- F: Supplemental Material: Attached.

Prepared By: Judith Hunt, Project Historian  
Historic American Building Survey  
August, 1985

PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION:

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey of the National Park Service in agreement with the post command at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the headquarters of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, D.C. The project was completed under the general supervision of Robert J. Kapsch, Chief of the HABS/HAER Division. Sally Kress Tompkins, Deputy Chief of HABS/HAER, served as Program Coordinator and Robie S. Lange, HABS Historian, as Project Leader. The field Supervisor was James A. Glass (historian, Cornell University); the project historians were Judith E. Hunt (University of Missouri-St.Louis) and Kristie D. Struble (University of Virginia).

F. Supplemental Material  
1. Building # 39 - # 41,  
Front and side elevations

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Front Elevation

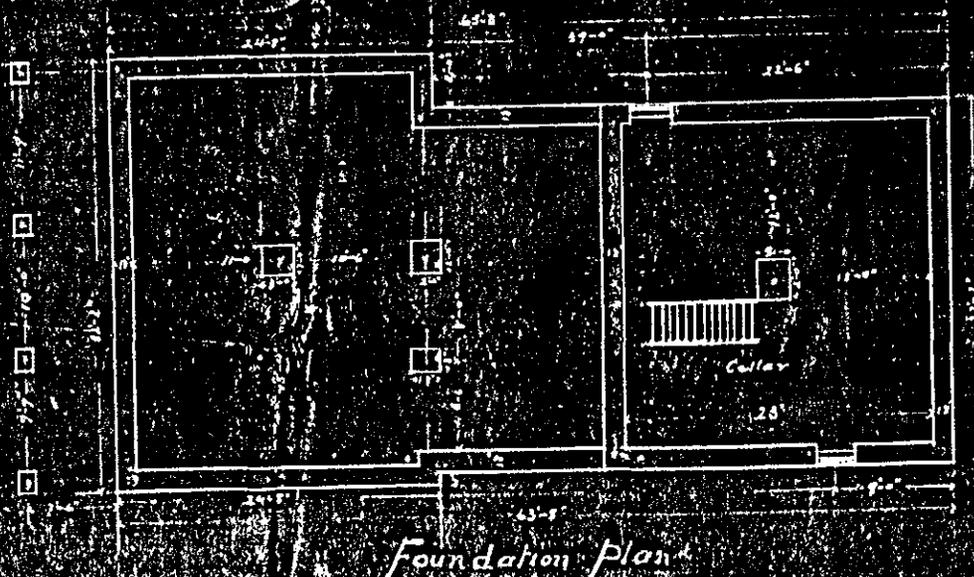
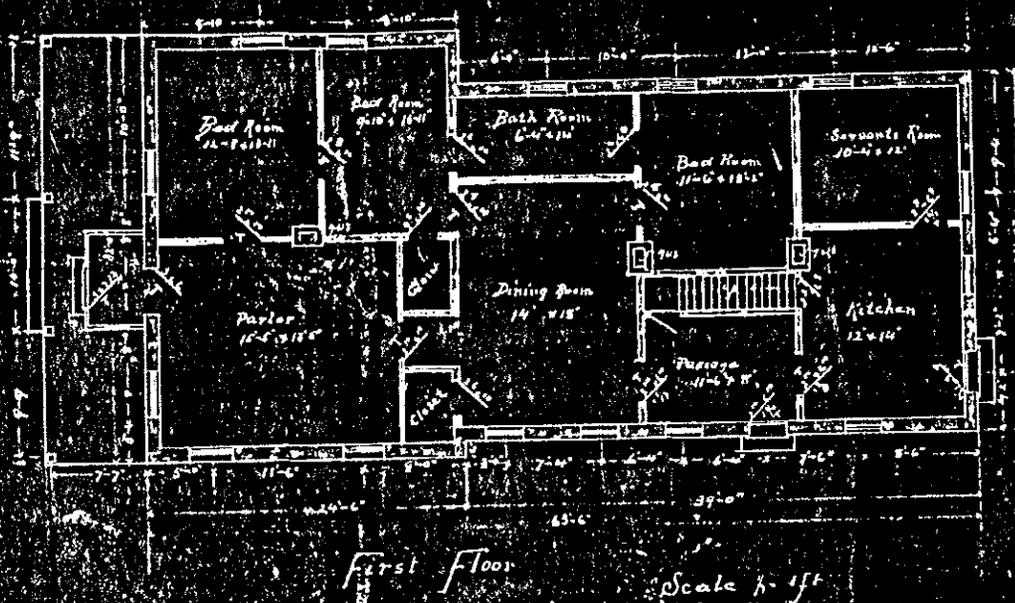


Side Elevation

Scale 1/8" = 1 ft

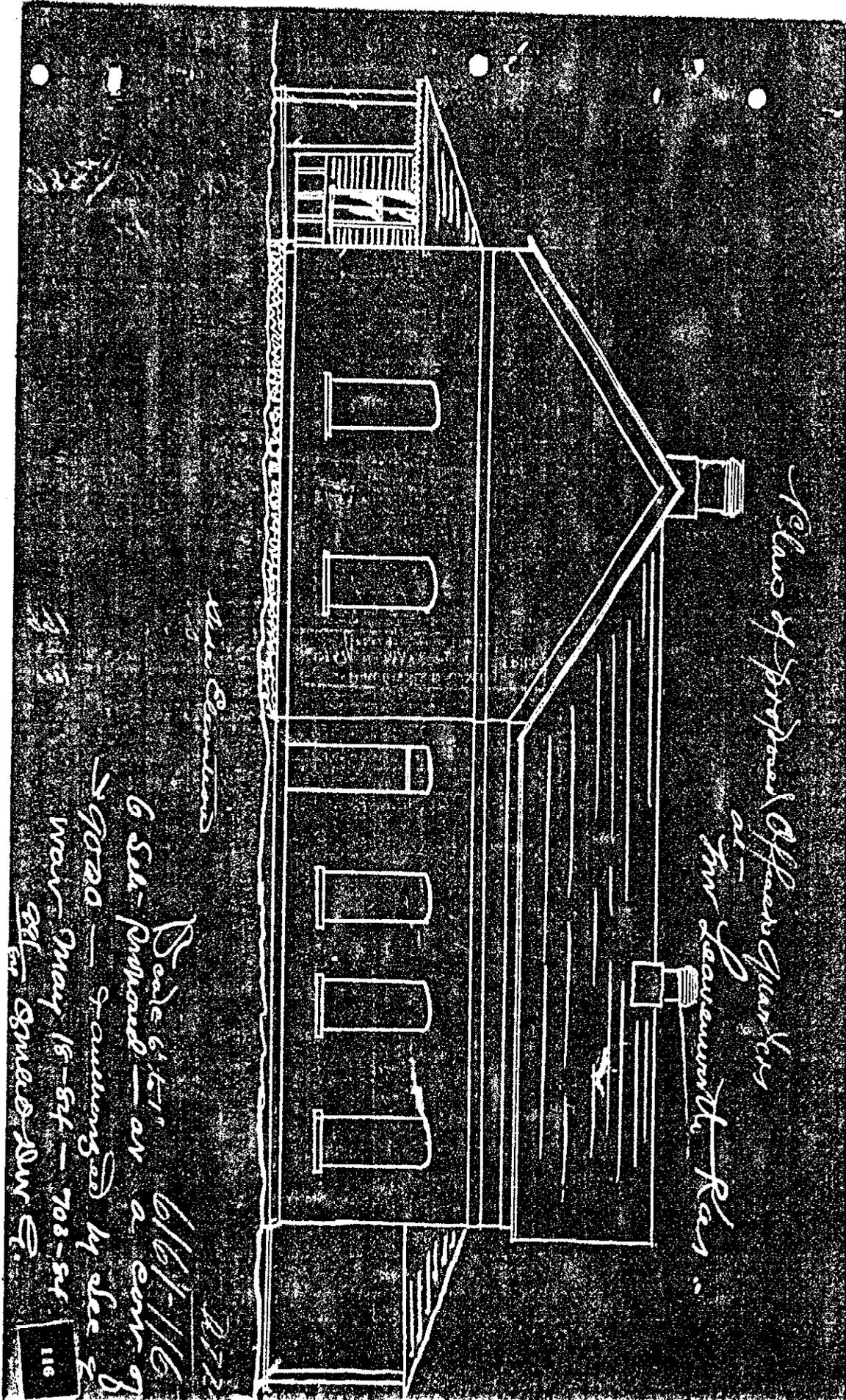
2. Building # 39- # 41,  
Foundation and first floor  
plan

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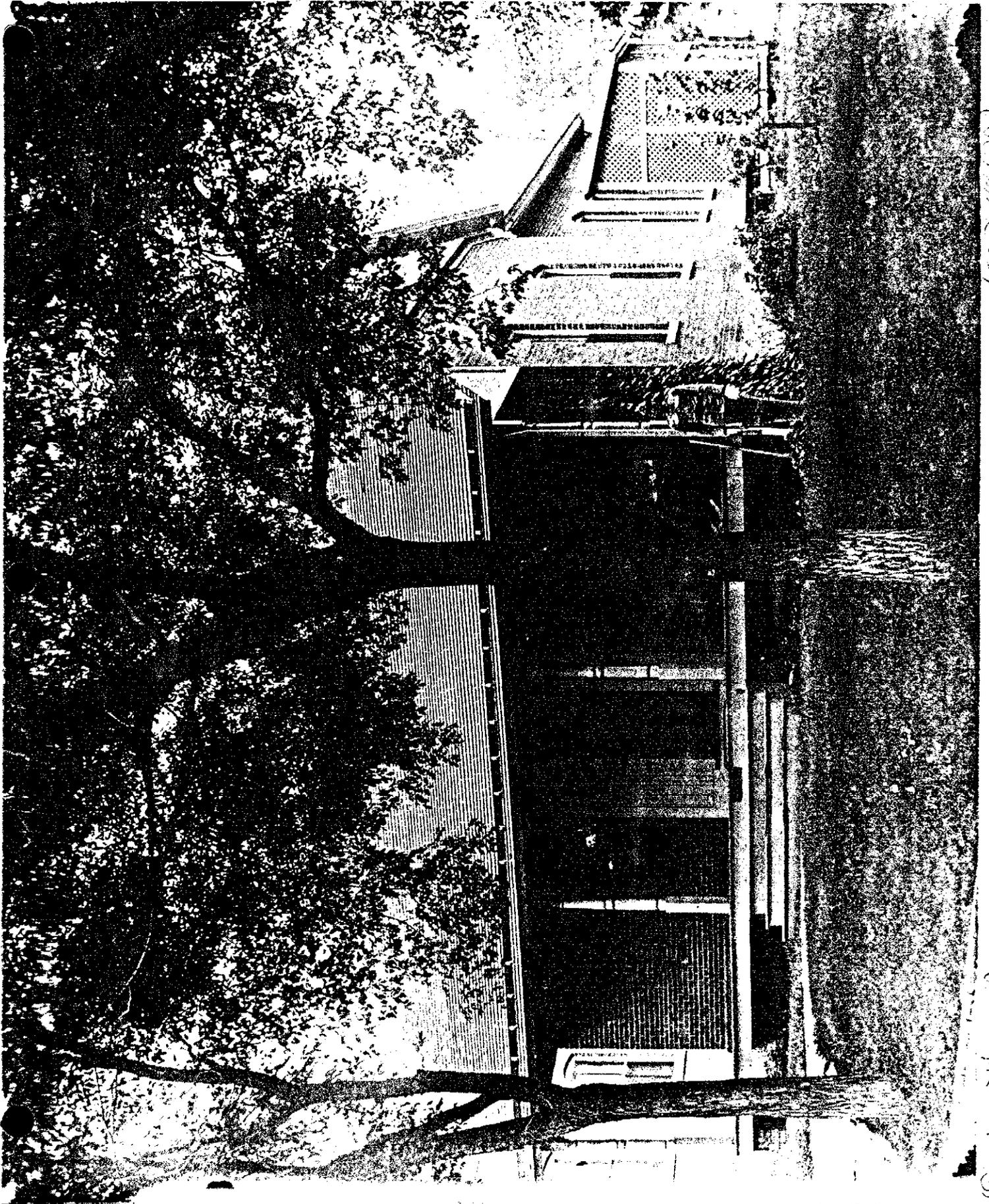


3. Plan of Proposed Officer's Quarters, side elevation

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Quarters, Thomas Ave

